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Cover: Color photograph of interlocked tapestry-woven poncho-shirt, Middle Horizon, Huari-Tiahuanaco style. Alfred C. Glassell, Jr. Collection, Houston, Texas. Color plate courtesy of Mr. Glassell.

The views expressed by the authors are their own; they do not necessarily reflect those of the Textile Museum.

Book Review

May H. Beattie, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection of Oriental Rugs*, Costagnola, Ticina (Switzerland) 1972. 132 pages, 18 color plates. 38 Swiss francs.

Andrei Andreyevich Bogolyubov, *Carpets of Central Asia*. Edited by J. M. A. Thompson, translated by J. M. A. Thompson and Rudi Ritschel. The Crosby Press, Wheathold Green, Ramsdell, Hampshire RG26 5SA, England, 1973. 122 pages, 38 color plates, 23 black and white plates, 2 color maps. £ 30.

M. S. Dimand and Jean Mailey, *Oriental Rugs in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1973. 353 pages, 19 color plates, 297 black and white plates, 7 maps. \$45.

Murray L. Eiland, *Oriental Rugs, A Comprehensive Guide*, New York Graphic Society, Greenwich, Conn., 1973. 196 pages, 35 color plates, 179 black and white plates, 13 maps. \$16.95.

SEVERAL IMPORTANT ADDITIONS to Islamic rug studies have been published recently. These books may be reviewed most usefully as a group since their contents are interrelated. The Catalogue of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection by Dr. May H. Beattie provides us with a standard with which other catalogues in the rug field undoubtedly will be compared.

In the years since the original catalogue of this famous Swiss collection was published in 1941 the number of entries has been reduced due to a family property division. Several important additions have been made and among the 18 rugs presently in the collection are, as Beattie notes, "some of the most celebrated carpets in the world." She provides information on the history of the collection and on the rug producing countries involved as well as detailed catalogue entries. In addition to comprehensive provenience and historical data, a technical analysis of each rug, accompanied by a superb color plate, is included in this handsome book.

Every researcher in the field of rugs seems to have his own pet notation method for technical data. Although Dr. Beattie supplies a key to her symbols and a section explaining both technical and art historical terms, the proliferation of these notation systems along with the use of special terminologies has made communication in the rug field difficult. It would be better if, instead of cryptic systems and personal terminology, which are fine for field work but not in print, authors would use descriptive language that does not require translation. In addition, it would be preferable to follow Denny's proposal (*Textile Museum Journal*, 1973, pp. 21-25) for applying the now standardized spelling of Turkish words and places (the variants can be entered in paranthesis). I

also find Beattie's description of S and Z spin confusing.

Lack of adequate and clear technical data has been one of two major deficiencies in many rug publications. The other has been lack of accurate proveniences. Rug scholarship has begun to attack these two problems in recent years. Finally field information is beginning to be reported.¹ Modern ethnologists are providing us with information on the now settled and tribally fragmented groups of Türkmén (Turkoman) living in Iran and Afghanistan, where designs are no longer always traditional. Very few specific proveniences have been available about tribal weaving of the 19th century. The only real source of such information has been the work of General Andrei Andreyevich Bogolyubov, [spelled Bogolubow in the original edition], who was Governor of the Transcaspien Province of Russia and who collected Türkmén (Turkoman) rugs in order to understand better the tribal groups of the area. He collected 139 rugs and in 1908 and 1909 published a magnificent volume in two parts with 36 color tempera drawings by K. Michine, 23 black and white illustrations, and two excellent maps, including one ethnographic map giving locations of the main tribal groups as Bogolyubov knew them. Often he gave us the tribe and the place where the rug was obtained. This is not a great deal of information but it is the only first hand information on this period. The original edition was published in Russian, French and German, but no English edition has appeared except a typescript translation (a copy of which is in the Textile Museum Library) by Amos B. Thacher (no date), hence the importance of an English translation. Dr. J. M. A. Thompson has done us all a great service in providing it. The translation, made in collaboration with Rudi Ritschel working with both the Russian and French texts, as opposed to Thacher's working only from the French translation, seems to be well done. It agrees in all essentials with Thacher's text, and the important place and tribal designations are, I am sure, accurate. I am not sure that Thompson's re-organization of the plates to reflect tribal relationships is helpful. He departs from tradition and gives us editorial comments (printed in red) after the descriptions of each rug. His commentary is sometimes clarifying, sometimes personal, and does not, in my opinion, detract from the original, although it seems to demonstrate that the extent of our knowledge has not increased greatly since Bogolyubov. Perhaps the proliferation of names and sub-tribes in the literature has served to obfuscate more than to illuminate. The proveniences, along with the plates, are what is of interest today and we are grateful to Thompson for presenting them to us in English.

There is one crucial ingredient missing. General Bogolyubov provides no technical data on the rugs he collected. At this point we can have only designs to compare with other rugs. Hard information on wool, spin, weave, knots, etc., would be extremely helpful corroborative information to assist art historians in relating other Türkmén rugs to actual tribal groups. If we could gather this technical data on Bogolyubov's

rugs, and combine it with modern ethnographic studies, I think it would facilitate the clarification of Türkmen rug proveniences. Even so, I doubt if it will ever be possible to associate most Türkmen rugs with the myriad sub-tribes and with exact location within the 19th-early 20th century time-span, especially since in the process of reaching their current settled state, tribal and geographic relationships have been altered appreciably.

One handicap rug scholars have often faced has been the difficulty of obtaining access to many of the important museum collections. This has now been remedied in part by the publication of the catalogue of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's rugs, written by Dr. Maurice S. Dimand, Curator Emeritus of Islamic Art, with a chapter on and a catalogue section of rugs from China by Jean Mailey, Associate Curator of the Textile Study Room.

Unfortunately not all of the Metropolitan rugs have been included; nevertheless, the catalogue is profusely illustrated. While it is valuable to have the bulk of one of the most important rug collections in one volume, it should be noted that there are several inadequacies in the text.

The awkward layout makes it difficult to discern which illustration goes with which caption and there is a confusing dual numbering system to the rugs. Spelling of place names is contradictory from place to place in the text. It is an immense handicap not to have an index in such a complex volume. Handling of technical data is inadequate. One of the most serious omissions is the spin and ply of the yarns. Very little information is given on selvages and end finishes. While the total knot count to the square inch is indicated, omission of knot counts across the warp and weft seriously lessens the value of this information.

There are undoubtedly a number of controversial areas where art historians might disagree on attributions and datings, such as the prayer rug in figure 122 (page 90) for example, or number 194 (page 294).

Jean Mailey's chapter on Chinese, Mongolian and Sinkiang rugs is a recapitulation of the history of rugs in that area. One phase that is still largely unrecorded is the 20th century commercial history. Recollections by businessmen involved about the rug production in this period is still possible and should be recorded by someone before it is too late.

Mailey illustrates one rug or hanging (figure 264) on which I can perhaps shed a little additional light from information on file at the Textile Museum. She lists the Metropolitan's rug as Western China, 19th century, which is correct. The Textile Museum has several of these stamped and painted pieces. Most of them, having been exposed to light, are badly faded, (as are the Metropolitan pieces) but one of those in the Textile Museum which was stored by its donor in a trunk for years has retained its bright and gaudy colors. We have found that some of these rugs are stamped with information about manufacture. These were made under French auspices in a hand manufactory in Shanghai province. One of the Textile Museum's pieces has a legibly stamped date of 1910.

This piece seems to be of later date than some of the others. The birds are no longer tapestry woven. Earlier, these rugs may have been made further up the Yangtse as Mailey suggests. At the end of the tradition they were probably made in manufactories in the Shanghai settlements.

The final book under consideration of this review is by Murray L. Eiland, a California psychiatrist and a rug collector.

I am sorry Dr. Eiland has chosen to write in the format of the general rug book. He obviously has a lot more to offer than the usual rug author for he has travelled in Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan and in a number of instances has first-hand information on weaving in specific villages and on rugs in village mosques. Detailed reports of systematic observations in a series of specific reports would have been far more useful. Instead, he has succumbed to the temptation to "put it all together", the bugbear of rug collectors past and present and something that is not possible within the current state of our knowledge.

Eiland implies a promise which is not fulfilled in the title which contains the words "A Comprehensive Guide" and in the introduction which is highly critical of past rug literature. Generally we are presented with conclusions rather than evidence. It is difficult sometimes to tell when he is speaking from first-hand observation and when he is paraphrasing from the literature. He relies heavily on Cecil Edwards' *The Persian Carpet* in the Persian section. Even the maps seem to have been done with Edwards' as models. While I would suggest reading Edwards first, it is useful to have Eiland's additions which bring us up-to-date on some weaving villages, (Edwards reports from his last trip in 1948). Eastern Turkish and "Yuruk" rugs are passed over cursorily. His contributions are not always from first-hand observation in other areas, although he seems to have visited some Türkmen centers.

The illustrations are poor and book production is careless. Most of the rugs seem to be from either his own collection or from the "Oriental Rug Company" in Berkeley, California. Unfortunately, Eiland tends not to show pictures of the commercial modern rugs about which he has first-hand knowledge. It is disturbing to see that many of the illustrations do not have credit lines.

Some terminology problems exist. Although citing Irene Emery² he insists on using the general term *brocade* when he is referring to the structure known as *brocading* or *brocaded* (pp. 27, 118, 134). Flat-woven types such as Soumak are sometimes referred to as "stitched" rugs (e.g. p. 126). The term "double selvedge" used to describe a type of selvedge is unclear. In addition, the text does not always agree with information in the captions. For example, compare the caption on plate 177, "Derbend Rug", with the text under "Rugs of the North Caucasus", p. 189. Often spelling of Persian place names varies from text to captions on maps. He tends to use a mixture of various languages to name woven objects, whereas it would be more consistent to adhere to one language when discussing a specific group such as the Turkic

speaking Türkmen; if it is indeed necessary to continue using foreign words for easily translatable everyday objects such as saddlebag (e.g. "Khordjin"-Eiland, from *hurçun* in Turkish).

His technical notational system seems to have been based on Louisa Bellinger's.³ From my point of view, it is another of those cryptic codes which, requiring translation, are not suitable for publication.

I do not wish to leave the impression that because of the above mentioned shortcomings this is not a worthwhile book. Dr. Eiland has been to some rug producing areas to look for himself. He understands the importance of providing technical information, and his captions are, in that respect, useful. I hope in the future he will give us the benefit of some detailed field reports on specific areas.

The books under review belong on the shelves of all rug students: the Thyssen-Bornemisza catalogue as an example of thorough workmanship and the other three for the new resources which they put at our disposal.

NOTES

¹Dr. May H. Beattie, "Some Weft-float Brocaded Rugs of the Bergama-Ezine Region", in *Textile Museum Journal*, vol. III, No. 2, December 1971. Dr. Walter B. Denny, "Anatolian Rugs: An Essay on Method", and Anthony N. Landreau, "Kurdish Kilim Weaving in the Van-Hakkari District of Eastern Turkey", both in *Textile Museum Journal*, vol. III, No. 4, December 1973.

²Irene Emery, *The Primary Structures of Fabrics, An Illustrated Classification*, The Textile Museum, Washington, D. C. 1966

³Ernst Kühnel, *Cairene Rugs and Others Technically Related, 15th-17th Century*, with technical analysis by Louisa Bellinger. The Textile Museum, Washington, D. C. 1957.

— Anthony N. Landreau

BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

Richard Ettinghausen, Maurice S. Dimand and Louise W. Mackie. *Prayer Rugs*. Published by the Textile Museum, Washington, D. C., 1974. 139 pages, 33 color plates, 42 black and white illustrations, and a map. \$28.00 - hardcover; \$19 - softbound.

The first publication in the United States to cover the subject of prayer rugs. It illustrates Islamic prayer rugs exhibited at the Textile Museum during September-December 1974, and at the Montclair Art Museum of New Jersey, January-March 1975. Dr. Ettinghausen discusses the importance of the prayer carpet in the Muslim culture; Dr. Dimand presents information about the history of the rugs, and Miss Mackie supplies catalogue entries for each rug.

Patricia L. Fiske, *Prayer Rugs from Private Collections*. Published by the Textile Museum, Wash-

ington, D. C., 1974. 39 pages, 34 black and white illustrations. \$2.50.

A guide to the exhibition held at the Textile Museum September-December 1974 and at the Montclair Art Museum of New Jersey, January-March 1975.

Walter A. Fairservis, Jr. *Costumes of the East*. Published in association with The American Museum of Natural History, The Chatham Press, Riverside, Conn., 1971. 160 pages. Illustrations in color and in black and white. \$15.00.

In this book the author takes a look at a form of cultural and ethnic expression which is fast disappearing not only from Eurasia but from the entire world. Although the focus is on an area lying between Scandinavia and the Bering Sea, and the eastern Mediterranean through Southeast Asia, the influence of Western man is demonstrated significantly by Dr. Fairservis.

Veronika Gervers-Molnár, *The Hungarian Sziir, An Archaic Mantle of Eurasian Origin*, History, Technology and Art Monograph I, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada, 1973. 142 pages, 83 black and white illustrations. \$5.00.

This scholarly monograph traces the history of the Hungarian Sziir mantles to the Medes. Excellently documented and illustrated, it is a thorough art-historical exposition of a very interesting subject. The author is Assistant Curator in the Textile Department of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.

Japanese Design Motifs: 4,260 Illustrations of Heraldic Crests. Compiled by The Matduya Piece-Goods Store. Translated by Fumie Adachi, who has supplied a new Introduction. Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1972. 216 pages. \$3.50.

The individual designs collected in this book represent the 900-year-old tradition of Japanese family crests. Although thousands of motifs are represented, they do not have much identification.

Heinz E. Kiewe, with Forewords by Michael Biddulph and Victor Woods. *Civilization on Loan*. Published by A.N.I. Ltd., Oxford, England. 526 pages, 400-plus black and white illustrations. \$29.00.

This provocative book illustrates its thesis with many examples of various arts the manner by which Western civilization has borrowed, through the ages, from Eastern Culture, particularly from China.

George E. Linton, *The Modern Textile and Apparel Dictionary*, 14th revised and enlarged edition, published in 1973 by Textile Book Service Division of Bonn Industries, Inc., Plainfield, N. J. \$24.00.

The Dictionary's 750 pages contain 16,000 old and new domestic and foreign terms and definitions of old and new fabrics and fibers. Mr. Linton, a leading textile authority, is Professor Emeritus of Textile Department, Fashion Institute of Technology; Textile Editor for *American Fabrics Magazine* and a former Trustee of the Textile Museum.